Demotivation of Students in Arabic Learning

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze the forms of demotivation of students in learning Arabic along with the solutions made by Arabic teachers in dealing with the demotivation of students. This research method is descriptive qualitative. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique from an Arabic teacher and several students of the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School. The data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation techniques and then analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques. The results showed that the students of the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School had five forms of demotivation in learning Arabic, namely: fear, value conflict, lack of freedom, lack of confidence, and boredom. Even some students experience two or more forms of demotivation in learning Arabic in themselves. The solution made by Arabic teachers in dealing with this demotivation is through the application of learning methods that enable students to converse in Arabic, such as exemplary methods, habituation, and labeling object names. This research has implications for the importance of the environment to motivate students in learning Arabic so that they are accustomed to conversing in Arabic without imposing a perfect mastery of Arabic grammar rules.

I. Introduction

Arabic is a subject that must be taught in madrasas based on the Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 184 of 2019 concerning Guidelines for Curriculum Implementation in Madrasas. The decision was based on the importance of mastering Arabic as the language of the Qur'an, the language of hadith, the language of classical Islamic books, and the language of worship (Farid & Hatami, 2022). Therefore, to study Islam, Arabic is needed. In fact, it has become the second international language after English (Andriani, 2015). Language is one of the most important things in the life of every human being. Each of them is of course inseparable from language, the first time a child gets a language that is heard directly from the father or mother when the child is born into this world. Then as time goes by and as the child grows, they will acquire a language other than the language taught by the mother and father, either in the form of a second, third, foreign language or so on which is called language acquisition where it depends on the social environment and cognitive level possessed by these children through the learning process in their environment. (Purba, N. et al. (2020).

The adoption of Arabic as an international language has implications for learning Arabic in madrasas and Islamic boarding schools not only as a tool in the study of classical Islamic books, but also requires the ability to communicate them. This is a problem in learning Arabic at the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School, Barru Regency, Indonesia, namely students know the rules (grammar) of Arabic sentences and have memorized

mufradāt (Arabic vocabulary) but are difficult to talk or communicate. The students were not motivated and lacked confidence in muḥādaṡah (conversation) even though they had studied Arabic grammar.

The pre-research observation indicated that the students were demotivated, namely the condition of not having the drive to learn Arabic. Meanwhile, in the context of foreign language learning, motivation has an important role in learning success (Gloria, 2020: Noviantoro, 2014). This has attracted various foreign language learning researchers to examine the problem of learning motivation, including:

First, Aladdin (2013) wrote with the title "Demotivating Factors in the Arabic Language Classroom: What demotivates non-Muslim Malaysian learners when it comes to learning Arabic?" in the journal Procedia -Social and Behavioral Sciences, Volume 93 (2013). The purpose of this study was to analyze the demotivating factors associated with learning Arabic as a foreign language in non-Muslim Malaysian students. The results showed that there were nine motivating factors, namely (1) subject-related factors; (2) teacher-related factors; (3) class-related factors; (4) negative attitudes towards the foreign language; (5) course materials and learning content; (6) the compulsory nature of the Arabic course; (7) time constraints; (8) lack of opportunities to communicate in Arabic; (9) lack of abilities. In contrast to the research conducted by the author, the object is the demotivation of students who are prepared as Muslim scholars and even scholars who are able to study the Qur'an, hadith, and classical Islamic books as well as communicate them well.

Second, Khouya (2018) wrote with the title "Students Demotivating Factors in the EFL classroom: The Case of Morocco" in the journal Advances in Language and Literary Studies, Volume 9, Number 2 (2018). This quantitative study was conducted to investigate the problem of demotivation in English language learning (ELL) within the Moroccan context. Six main findings were reported: (1) students positively perceived themselves in ELL; (2) students did not consider English language as a demotivating factor while learning it itself; (3) students were largely positive towards their teachers of English; (4) crowded classrooms were the main demotivators in learning environment among classmates, textbook of English, and classroom atmosphere; (5) generally, the learning environment was the main demotivating factor in ELL; (6) as for gender, there was no significant difference between males and females in terms of the number of demotivating factors that they encountered.

Third, Albab (2019) wrote with the title "Motivation in Learning Arabic as a Foreign Language" in the journal Tamaddun: Journal of Islamic Culture and Literature, Volume 19, Number 1 (2019). This study found that motivation has a positive correlation with success in learning Arabic. In addition, learning strategies, adequate facilities such as books, a school environment that supports the learning atmosphere, and teachers who act as motivators are needed in learning Arabic as a foreign language.

Fourth, Gloria's thesis research (2020) entitled "Investigating Demotivation in Learning English Among High School Students in the Indonesian EFL Context" at the State University of Malang. This study aims to investigate the factors that can cause high school students in Indonesia to feel demotivated (demotivators) in learning English. This study found five main demotivators, namely: 1) teacher-related factors, 2) content and teaching materials, 3) students' perspectives and interest in English, 5) learning environment, and 5) experience of failure. In addition, three new demotivators were found that were not included in the interview guide, namely: 1) lack of self-confidence, 2) lack of learning community, and 3) interference with other foreign languages being studied.

Similar to the findings of previous research on demotivation outside Indonesia, students in Indonesia consider teacher-related factors the most demotivating factor in learning English.

Fifth, Jama (2022) wrote with the title "Exploring the Motivation Orientations for Learning Arabic as L2 Based on Self Determination Theory" in the International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies, Volume 3, Number 1 (2022). This study aims to analyze the motivational orientation of Arabic language learners at King Khalid University based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT). The results showed that religious identity and religious motives have a latent role in determining the students' overall motivation orientations in learning Arabic. Also, the results show ed that demotivating factors could possibly exist among learners of Arabic in the Saudi context.

Various objectives and results of previous studies only analyzed the motivation of Arabic language learners who paid attention to the positive influence on interest in learning Arabic. Meanwhile, demotivating factors are generally only studied in learning English as a foreign language. Thus, the study of demotivation of students in learning Arabic has not been comprehensively studied according to the wishes of the author. Therefore, it is important to conduct research that aims to analyze (1) the forms of demotivation of the students of the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School in learning Arabic and (2) the solutions made by the teacher against this demotivation. This research is very important because it can be used as a reflection material for the unsuccessful achievement of learning Arabic in relation to the demotivating factors of students.

II. Research Method

This study uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. Researchers entered the research location to observe natural phenomena and directly interviewed informants who mastered the problem of demotivating students in learning Arabic at the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School, Barru Regency. The primary data sources in this study consisted of (1) several students to obtain demotivating data for students in learning Arabic and (2) Arabic teachers at Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) and Madrasah Aliah (MA) Pondok Pesantren DDI Mangkoso to obtain data about solutions that conducted by the teacher on the demotivation of students in learning Arabic. Secondary data sources come from various books, journals, and research reports on demotivation in learning Arabic as a theoretical basis.

Data were collected using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The observation guide and interview grid were compiled based on ten demotivating factors revealed by Buckley (2022) along with their indicators, namely: (1) fear, (2) inaccurate goals, (3) lack of clarity about what is desired, (4) value conflict, (5) lack of freedom, (6) lack of challenge, (7) lack of self-confidence, (8) loneliness, (9) boredom, and (10) not knowing what to do next.

The data collected were analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques developed by Huberman and Miles (2002), namely: (1) Data reduction, used to summarize or select important/main data according to the research focus so that themes and patterns can be found related to the demotivational picture of students in learning Arabic and its solutions. (2) Data presentation, is used to describe data that has been reduced into the form of narrative paragraphs and pictures so that it is easily understood by the reader. (3) Drawing conclusions, namely the results of the analysis and the author's understanding of natural patterns that are repeated in the observations or answers of informants related to the demotivation of students in learning Arabic and their solutions.

III. Result and Discussion

3.1 Forms of Santri Demotivation in Arabic Learning

Data from observations and interviews show that of the 10 types of demotivation proposed by Buckley (2022), 5 (five) of them have been experienced by students, namely:

a. Fear

The santri informants revealed that they were afraid and did not enjoy learning Arabic because of the teacher's factors and the characteristics of the Arabic language which were considered difficult subjects. Arabic teachers both at Madrasah Aliyah (MA) and Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) generally use the rote method and give punishment in the form of physical sanctions that educate students if they do not memorize their assignments. Moreover, learning Arabic is very complex, equipped with Nahwu and Sharaf subjects. Nahwu learning uses the Matan al-Ajrūmiyah and Alfiyah Ibn Mālik books, most of the sentences and stanzas must be memorized by the students.

Nahwu is related to Arabic grammar and Sharaf is related to changing the form of verbs in Arabic. All of them must be mastered by the students of the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School as capital in studying the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical Islamic texts as the basis for Islamic studies. This makes students feel afraid and not happy to learn Arabic, because it requires complex mastery of grammar through rote memorization. They even have to be sanctioned for not memorizing, such as standing up until the lesson is over.

Thus, it can be said that these findings have confirmed Siobhan Harmer's view of demotivation by fear. As previously described, Siobhan Harmer claims that one of the "forms" of demotivation in the learning process is fear, and this is truly reflected in the researchers' findings regarding the types of demotivation that occurred at the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School. This finding further confirms that fear in the learning process is one of the psychological "diseases" that can convert motivation into demotivation. That is, in the context of this study, even if a santri previously had a great desire and motivation to master Arabic, the fear that he experienced in the learning process would erode that motivation, until all that was left was demotivation.

b. Value Conflict

Field finding data shows that students are indicated to experience value conflicts so that it has an impact on the emergence of demotivation in learning Arabic. In general, santri informants revealed that they did not aspire to become ulama, nor did they aspire to continue their studies in the Middle East (Arab country). Their ideals do not require perfect grammatical skills / mastery of Arabic. Therefore, they learn Arabic only because it is included in the pesantren curriculum, not because of their interests. In other words, they don't like learning Arabic.

In addition, the benefits of Arabic have not been felt in everyday life because there are no rules that require students to use Arabic in daily conversation, both in certain areas and at certain times. Therefore, students feel they need other lessons or training that develop their talents and interests. This is what raises the conflict of values in the students of the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School so that they experience demotivation in learning Arabic. On the one hand, he must participate in Arabic learning with the output meeting the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), on the other hand he has not felt the benefits of learning Arabic because his ideals do not require perfect grammatical mastery of Arabic.

c. Lack of Freedom

Students in learning Arabic are less involved in determining their preferred way of learning. In addition, the learning objectives are only directed at being able to read the yellow book (classical Islamic book) properly and correctly while some students only want to be able to muḥādaṡah (conversing in Arabic). This indicates that the students feel that their autonomy and freedom are confined to determine the goals and ways of learning Arabic. In addition, the learning methods applied by Arabic teachers have not freed students to work together or familiarize students in their groups to pronounce mufradāt (Arabic words) or Arabic sentences so that they accidentally memorize them.

d. Lack of Confidence

The students' confidence in practicing Arabic conversation in daily life is reduced or even lost due to some other students sometimes bullying them. The absence of rules regarding the time or area of mandatory Arabic speaking makes Arabic conversations considered as something that is not uncommon in the daily life of students. Thus, students who try to have Arabic conversations are considered joking so that they sometimes get bullied from their other friends.

In addition, students feel ashamed to speak Arabic because they often forget vocabulary or try to adapt to the rules (grammar) of Arabic that they have learned at school/madrasah. Even though they have memorized a lot of vocabulary, the students are still ashamed to make mistakes because mistakes will end up being ridiculed by their friends.

e. Boredom

Some santri informants revealed that the Arabic learning method was less varied, generally they were only asked to memorize, listen to explanations, then practice memorizing and explanations from the teacher in front of the class. Other santri informants revealed that learning Arabic is only done in the classroom without any new atmosphere or new experiences in an effort to improve Arabic language skills outside the classroom. The monotonous methods and ways of learning make students feel bored.

Another factor that makes students feel bored in learning Arabic is the density of students' activities, both academic and non-academic. The pesantren's desire to integrate the national education curriculum and the pesantren curriculum has implications for the increase in Arabic language material or other allied subjects, such as nahwu and sharaf equipped with balagah and mantiq so that the instructional objectives of learning Arabic are increasing. This makes the lesson hours more and more and the students' learning load increases as well.

In addition to these forms of demotivation, this study found that a santri may have two or more demotivating factors so that he is not motivated to learn Arabic. Data from each student informant showed that he experienced more than one demotivating factor which the authors termed demotivating complications. In fact, several informants admitted that they experienced the five forms/demotivation factors that have been described previously.

3.2 Teacher's Solution in Dealing with Demotivation of Santri in Arabic Learning

The solution taken by Arabic teachers to deal with the demotivation of students in learning Arabic is the application of varied and fun methods. Several methods were used, including: (1) exemplary, (2) habituation, and (3) naming objects.

a. The Exemplary Method

The Arabic teacher is an example to always use Arabic in daily conversation. The attitude of Arabic teachers to always use Arabic when speaking has become an agreement between them.

b. Habituation Method

Santri are accustomed to conversing in Arabic through an Arabic teacher who always greets the students in Arabic. It aims to familiarize students with listening to Arabic and learning situationally. When a word is expressed, the teacher immediately gives a signal so that students understand its meaning, so that students can find out a lot of Arabic vocabulary without struggling to memorize it.

c. Method of Naming Objects

In the classroom or dormitory assisted by the Arabic teacher, every object is labeled with an Arabic name so that the students accidentally memorize it. Unfortunately, this labeling is not accompanied by the mention of the name of the object in Arabic by the students.

Paying attention to the three methods applied by the teacher are generally carried out in activities outside of classroom learning. Therefore, the implementation of learning in the classroom is still monotonous with the memorization method and punishment for students who do not memorize or complete their assignments.

3.3 Discuss

The form of demotivation of students in learning Arabic is an internal problem for students, such as fear, conflict of values, feeling less free, lack of confidence, and boredom. Although these various forms of demotivation are internal problems, they are heavily influenced by external factors (Aydin, 2012). Therefore, the factors that influence the demotivation of students in this study are divided into two, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors are factors that come from the students themselves, while external factors are factors that come from outside or the santri environment (Wang & Guan, 2020).

Various internal factors that cause demotivation of students in learning Arabic are the ideals and interests of students. It is the ideals and interests of these students that lead to demotivating value conflicts because not all students have ideals that require perfect mastery of Arabic language tools. Although Arabic is not in demand, students still have to follow it because it is a mandatory curriculum for Islamic boarding schools. This is in accordance with the theory put forward by Buckley (2022) that a conflict of values in a person occurs when he views two or more values as equally important, but he himself in a certain situation is unable to accommodate all of these values.

Various external factors that cause demotivation of students in learning Arabic are (1) monotonous learning methods, (2) characteristics of Arabic which are considered difficult subjects, (3) not free to determine the goals and ways of learning Arabic, (4) not supported by an environment that is accustomed to Arabic conversation, and (5) the tight schedule of pesantren activities.

First, the monotonous learning method is a factor in the demotivation of students in learning Arabic. The memorization and punishment method (sanctions) applied by the teacher not only makes students unmotivated to learn but also fears the teacher because they are considered to only give memorization tasks and sanctions if the task cannot be memorized (Burga, 2019). While it is important for a teacher to be liked by his students,

because it can have implications for the enthusiasm and motivation of students to take part in learning (Johnson, 2017; Alhodiry, 2016). This is expressed by Suparjo (2017) as close-range communication, considered close because students like to communicate (actively in learning) with teachers because of their methods, tactics, and teaching styles. However, it is also considered distant because there is an appreciation/respect of students to their teachers.

Second, the characteristics of Arabic which are considered difficult subjects. This makes students dislike Arabic. As a result, the interest of students decreases, which triggers the emergence of demotivation of students in learning Arabic. This finding is in accordance with the report of The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) (2015), that Arabic is a language that is difficult for speakers to learn. This language is classified as one class with Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese and Korean (Islam, 2015). This strengthens the findings of Irving (1957) which shows several difficulties in learning Arabic, such as the many sound systems that are different from other languages, including Indo-European languages, the complexity of the derivation system, the many changes in word form that require a lot of vocabulary that needs to be mastered in the process. the learning.

Third, students are not free to determine the goals and ways of learning Arabic. This makes students feel that they have lost their autonomy or freedom to be creative and express themselves. Meanwhile, according to Buckley (2022) everyone has their own tendencies or side of subjectivity. If a person feels that his autonomy or freedom is restricted then he will experience demotivation.

The subjectivity of each student indicates the possibility of heterogeneity of students in the class. Unfortunately, teachers pay less attention to the heterogeneity of students' abilities and interests before determining the learning method. The memorization method has become a hereditary heritage that has not dared to be changed, even though not all students have good memorization skills. Not to mention when it is associated with different types of student learning, ranging from visual, auditory, to kinesthetic (Firman et al., 2020).

Visual type students focus on vision, so learning media are needed that stimulate and activate their vision. Meanwhile, the auditory type students rely on hearing as the recipient of information and knowledge. This type of learning person does not really need visual media when studying, the important thing is that he can listen to the teacher's conversation well and clearly. Meanwhile, the kinesthetic type students like to learn with movement. Usually this type of person finds it easier to learn something by practicing it, it is not enough just to read it. By practicing the object being studied, it will provide a distinct experience for the kinesthetic type (Manipuspika, 2020; Gilakjani, 2012). Therefore, people who have this type of learning style usually don't feel comfortable staying in class for too long. Taking into account the heterogeneity of students and the types of learning, it is important to involve students in determining the goals and ways of learning Arabic.

Fourth, students are not supported by an environment that is accustomed to Arabic conversation so they are afraid to make mistakes and do not get the proper response when starting an Arabic conversation. Even though the students have a lot of mufradat (Arabic vocabulary) memorization, they are not confident in saying it because it is not supported by their environment. This is in accordance with Perdana's research (2019) which found that self-confidence has a positive influence on student learning activity. In addition, these findings reinforce Buckley's (2022) theory, that lack of confidence in undergoing a process will lead to confusion, sanctions, and distrust in the surrounding environment. In the context of the learning process, a student with any amount of motivation will be demotivated, if he does not have the confidence to achieve the learning objectives.

Fifth, the tight schedule of academic and non-academic pesantren activities due to the integration of the national education curriculum with the pesantren curriculum. This resulted in saturation of the students because of the many instructional goals to be achieved. This finding is in accordance with research by Noor (2006), that the neglect of various pesantren agendas sometimes begins with the desire to combine the national education system with the pesantren education system. The impact is that Islamic boarding school activities become very dense because of the many instructional goals to be achieved (Burga et al., 2019). The implication of this reality is the saturation of santri so that it is difficult to focus on producing ideal cadres as desired. Islamic studies lost their way; general learning is not optimal. In addition, this finding also strengthens Buckley's (2022) theory, that if a person experiences boredom then automatically in undergoing a process his motivation will decrease or even disappear and turn into demotivation.

Some of the solutions that Arabic teachers have done to overcome these various forms of demotivation are applying the exemplary method, refraction, and giving/labeling object names. The purpose of the three methods is to familiarize students with hearing and speaking Arabic. So, there is an effort by the teacher to create an environment that supports Arabic conversation. Unfortunately, these efforts are not optimal because the implementation of learning in the classroom is still monotonous with the memorization and punishment methods. In addition, the learning objectives are directed at the grammatical mastery of Arabic, so that students first think about the rules of nahwu (grammatical) and the form of taṣrīf (change of words / derivation) of sentences and words before they are spoken. This finding is in accordance with the results of Fahrurrozi's (2014) study, that learning Arabic in educational institutions is still stuck in grammar (grammar). As a result, students have difficulty at first and even feel afraid. Such learning encourages students not to enjoy learning Arabic. Therefore, it takes teachers who are able to apply varied and fun learning methods so that students' learning motivation is not reduced or even lost (Johnson, 2017).

IV. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion described earlier, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, the forms of demotivation of students at the DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School are fear, value conflict, lack of freedom, lack of self-confidence, and boredom. Even some students sometimes have two or more forms of demotivation. Second, the solution that the Arabic teacher does in dealing with the demotivation of students is the use of fun learning methods and activates students in speaking Arabic in everyday life, such as exemplary, habituation, and naming objects.

Based on these conclusions, several suggestions were submitted to parties related to this research, namely: (1) The DDI Mangkoso Islamic Boarding School should set a policy on the area or time required to speak in Arabic so that there is environmental support for students' motivation in improving Arabic language skills. (2) Arabic teachers should use more enjoyable learning methods and get students used to working together to express Arabic words or sentences so that they can master a lot of vocabulary without having to work hard to memorize them. (3) Santri to be more courageous and get used to speaking Arabic, because language proficiency depends on the courage to communicate with the language.

This research has implications for the need to develop Arabic language learning that is not oriented towards mastering aspects of linguistic competence, but also pays attention to other aspects such as sociolinguistic aspects, strategic competencies, and discourse

analysis competencies. Santri need other insights that have more selling points, so that Arabic can be more productive and promising. Therefore, Arabic teachers are needed who are experts in various learning methods. The reason is, whether students are happy or not with certain lessons depends on the way and strategy of the teacher delivering the lesson. The same goes for learning Arabic.

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